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How Many Reporters Rely on Philip Agee?

The *Wall Street Journal* in its August 21 issue acknowledged that two viciously anti-American publications were important sources for its huge assault on the State Department's "White Paper" on El Salvador (see September 5 HUMAN EVENTS). Those two publications were John Kelly's *CounterSpy* and Philip Agee's *Covert Action Information Bulletin*.

Kelly's *CounterSpy*, aside from "exposing" CIA agents abroad, has said this about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan: "Although questions remain regarding how Afghan President Amin was overthrown and replaced by Babrak Karmal on Dec. 27, 1979, one fact appears to be certain: The main thrust of the U.S. government version of events—that Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan and put Karmal in as their puppet—is pure propaganda."

Agee's *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, which was actually launched in 1978 in Havana, had this to say in its first issue (July 1978): "We are confident that there will be sufficient subscribers to make this publication a permanent weapon in the fight against the CIA, the FBI, military intelligence and all the other instruments of U.S. imperialist oppression throughout the world."

In criticizing the *Journal* for appearing to rely on such tainted sources, we remarked: "And our hunch is that a lot of other major publications rely on these same kinds of sources."

That hunch now seems to have been confirmed by three co-editors of Agee's *Covert Action Information Bulletin*, Ellen Ray, William H. Schaap and Louis Wolf. In a recent letter to the *Washington Post*, they lashed out at a *Post* editorial for condemning their activities of "exposing" CIA agents abroad as "contemptible" and for suggesting they were not honorable journalists.

But we are honorable journalists, they argued, for the *Post's* reporters—and, indeed, reporters around the world—rely on them for stories and scoops.

"Your diatribe," they remarked, "only highlights the gaps between the editorial offices and the reporters, for your people are among the large number of working journalists from virtually all the major printed and electronic media in the country who call upon us daily for help, research, and, of all things, names of intelligence operatives in connection with articles they are writing."

They are not "terrorists," as the *Post* contends, for, "You may disagree with our contention that the United States—and especially the CIA—is responsible for more terrorism, more death and destruction, over the past several decades than any other single institution in the world, but you could not read our publication without knowing that we are opposed to violence and terrorism—and as American citizens fighting hard against that for which the CIA is responsible."

"Not one single person has been physically harmed on account of what we do, while the CIA has been responsible for literally millions of deaths, in Chile, in Indonesia, in Laos, in South Korea, in Guatemala, in Jamaica, to cite just a few examples."

Yet it is this publication—with these remarkable views—which has become a major source for the "large number of working journalists." Is it any wonder that the anti-American and pro-Communist viewpoint is so frequently presented in the media?